North Dakota Department of Health

SMALLPOX
PEOPLE WHO SHOULD NOT GET THE SMALLPOX VACCINE
(*UNLESS* THEY ARE EXPOSED TO THE SMALLPOX VIRUS)

Some people are at greater risk for serious side effects from the smallpox vaccine. **Individuals who have any of the following conditions, or who live with someone who does**, should **NOT** get the smallpox vaccine **unless they have been exposed to the smallpox virus**:

- Eczema or atopic dermatitis. (This is true even if the condition is not currently active, is mild or was experienced as a child.)
- Skin conditions such as burns, chickenpox, shingles, impetigo, herpes, severe acne or psoriasis. (People who have any of these conditions should not get the vaccine until they have completely healed.)
- Weakened immune system. (Cancer treatment, an organ transplant, HIV or medications to treat autoimmune disorders and other illnesses can weaken the immune system.)
- Pregnancy or plans to become pregnant within one month of vaccination.

In addition, individuals should not get the smallpox vaccine if they:
- Have been diagnosed by a doctor as having a heart condition with or without symptoms OR if they have three or more cardiac risk factors.
- Are allergic to the vaccine or any of its ingredients.
- Are younger than 12 months of age. However, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) advises against non-emergency use of smallpox vaccine in children younger than 18 years of age.
- Have a moderate or severe short-term illness. (These people should wait until they are completely recovered to get the vaccine.)
- Are currently breastfeeding.

__Again, people who have been directly exposed to the smallpox virus should get the vaccine, regardless of their health status.__

Don't Hesitate!
If offered the smallpox vaccine, individuals should tell their immunization provider if they have any of the above conditions, or even if they suspect they might.